

ANNUAL REPORT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2005

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES EXPEDITED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FUND

OVERVIEW

Laws 1998, Chapter 10, Section 21(HB 2645) established through Arizona Revised Statute §8-812 the “Child Protective Services Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund”.

The Child Protective Services (CPS) Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund enables the Department of Economic Security (DES) to provide substance abuse treatment services so that permanency for dependent children can be expedited when parental substance abuse is a significant obstacle to family reunification. The Fund can also be used for substance abuse treatment for parents or guardians with a primary goal of facilitating family preservation, including services that maintain the family unit in a substance abuse treatment setting.

A.R.S. §8-812(F) require the Department make the following information available to the public on request and on the Department's website:

- ◆ The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with fund monies and who complete treatment.
- ◆ The number of cases and children who are able to remain with or are returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ Data for cases that are part of expedited dependency proceedings.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The Department maintains contracts with community agencies for the provision of substance abuse treatment and recovery support services. Expedited substance abuse treatment funds are integrated to ensure a comprehensive continuum of services are available in concert with Title XIX, TANF and State funded services. This integration has resulted in a blending of fund sources that emphasize coordination and maximization of treatment resources.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

A.R.S. §8-812(C) specifies that the state appropriation cannot be used on behalf of a parent unless the following are true:

- ◆ The parent or guardian is a party to a dependency action concerning a child of the parent or a child under the care of the guardian.
- ◆ The parent or guardian is not eligible for benefits under Title XIX of the Social Security Act or private insurance, or the necessary substance abuse treatment service is not available under Title XIX of the Social Security Act or private insurance.
- ◆ The case plan provides for the children to either remain with or return to parent or guardian.
- ◆ The treatment is necessary for the case plan to be accomplished.
- ◆ A recipient of services that are paid for with fund monies shall sign a written statement as outlined in the legislation.

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2005 APPROPRIATION

The sum of \$224,500 was appropriated to the department for State Fiscal Year 2005 for the CPS Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund. This appropriation was exempt from A.R.S. §35-190 relating to lapsing of appropriation. The following section of this report indicates the number of parents and children who were provided services paid for through this appropriation.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A.R.S. §8-812(F.1.): The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with Fund monies and who complete treatment.

One-hundred and one parents were provided services from the Fund appropriation. These clients include twenty-two parents who continued treatment authorized in the prior fiscal year. Of all participants, twenty-seven parents (27%) have completed treatment; forty-one (40%) left treatment prior to completion, while the remaining thirty-three parents (33%) continue to receive treatment and/or supportive services.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.2.): The number of cases and children who are able to remain with, or be returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with Fund monies.

Forty-eight children in twenty-three cases were able to remain with their parents or were returned to their parents as a result of treatment paid for in whole or in part with Fund monies.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.3.): The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with Fund monies.

In addition to those forty-eight children who received expedited placement with their parents, sixty-six children were able to achieve permanency through an alternative reunification plan such as guardianship, adoption or other Court approved permanency goals as a result of the Fund monies.

The parents/guardians of one hundred and twelve children continue with reunification efforts with their children.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.4.): Data for cases that are part of the expedited proceedings.

Ninety-nine cases were part of an expedited court proceeding.

CONCLUSION

Because of the availability of the Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund, the Department has been able to provide comprehensive substance abuse and necessary supportive services for clients involved in the child welfare system. The Fund makes available a comprehensive continuum of services to individuals who might not be eligible to receive needed services from another source, or it may supplement treatment services until another eligibility has been determined.

The provision of these services is critical in assisting the Department in making the reasonable efforts required by federal law to reunify families. Many parents have successfully completed treatment, enabling their children to be safely reunified with them. Many parents served have severe and chronic addiction disorders with co-existing mental health problems which may require long-term stabilization and repeated support over a long period of time. Addiction problems for these individuals may be so

severe that many parents were unable to make the necessary changes which would enable their child to be reunited with them within the timeframes established by the Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997. Even in circumstances when parents did not complete treatment or benefit from treatment to the extent necessary for reunification, the availability of services made possible by this Fund has given the parents a chance to remediate their substance abuse problems. Consequently, case managers were then able to pursue alternative permanency plans for children in a more timely manner.